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THE FARMER'S FLOWER GARDEN

The main planting of any home grounds should be trees and shrubs. To brighten the picture, which every home maker should try to produce by the arrangement of his materials, flowers should be grown. What kind of flowers to grow is a matter of personal taste and is not as important as where to grow them. An otherwise insignificant flower is attractive when seen against a background of foliage or buildings. Most of our flowers planted in beds, in the front lawn are not effective for this reason.

Further than this, it is too stingy a method of growing flowers. Nature grows flowers in a lavish way and one can pick them without spoiling the effect of the picture. The man who admires the formal geranium beds in the city parks does so because there is color enough to satisfy, while the half-dozen sickly yellow plants which he has planted in the yard do not make an impression. The man accustomed to doing large things is not impressed by a little flower bed covering an area no larger than a blanket. Have flowers in abundance, enough to furnish bouquets every day until frost. The seeds are cheap enough, when you can get twenty packets for a dollar.

Don't buy novelties, because, like fruits, their limits of adaptation are unknown and a person gets less seed for the extra price than of the well known species or varieties. Mixed packets are most satisfactory, especially of such things as sweet peas, nasturtiums, petunias, asters, etc., as one gets the whole range of color possible, which is infinitely more satisfactory when you wish to make bouquets.

Even if you are living upon a rented farm you can have flowers. Many of the best flowers are annuals. Send and get the catalogue of some well known seedsman and order your seeds immediately. If you wait until spring work begins you will not have time. Bachelor button (*Centaurea Cyanus*), core-

opsis; Clarkias, China asters, California poppies, candytuft, gillias, larkspurs, marigolds, nasturtiums, pot marigolds, pinks (*Dianthus*), phlox (*Drummondii*), petunias, poppies, portulacca, sweet alyssum, sweet peas, silene, stocks, verbenas and zinnias are the general purpose annuals.

Prepare the flower-border thoroughly and deeply, for annuals must make a quick growth. If the soil is not naturally rich, spade in well rotted manure or leaf mould from the woods. Do this very early in the season. If borders are made in sod, have them at least three feet wide, that the grass roots may not run underneath and rob the plants. Run a sharp spade around the bed from time to time early in the season to cut the grass roots.

Sow sweet peas just as early as you can work the ground in the spring. We generally have a warm spell about April 1, during which we should sow them. No matter if the ground freezes afterward, they will come out all right and be better than if sown later.

Such plants as cosmos and moonflowers, which require a long season, should be planted in a hot bed with your tomatoes and transplanted when danger of frost is past. Balsams, asters, phlox, etc., can be hurried forward in this manner. Most flowers should be planted at the season for corn planting.

Having your bed or border in the typical "onion bed" condition, press the surface level with a board, sow the seed thickly in drills or concentric circles depending on the location of your bed. If to be viewed from all sides place the tall kinds in the center, or if against a back-ground place the low ones in front. Make the edging of sweet alyssum or portulacca (rose moss). Sow the seeds at a depth of about four times their thickness; cover them and press the surface smooth again with the board. This will promote capillarity by firming the soil. When the seedlings are up, thin to the proper distance apart. Keep the surface loose by frequent cultivation.

Some of the best screens can be made of annual plants. Among the best are flowering bean, wild cucumber, morning glory, *cobæa scandens*, balloon vine and gourd. Such tall growing plants as sunflower, castor beans, *nicotiana*, etc., can be used for the same purpose. Sweet peas and nasturtiums are useful to hide a fence.

Many bulbous and tuberous plants can be grown by the reuter. *Gladiolus*, dahlias, dwarf cannas, tuberose and madeira vine are among those most widely grown. These bulbs must be taken up in the fall and kept over winter in the cellar in a temperature favorable to potatoes and onions. Start cannas, tuberose and dahlias early in spring in a warm room or hot bed.

The man who owns his own farm can have all these and more. He can use perennials in his flower-border. Suitable plants are pinks, paeonies, *gaillardia*, *rudbeckia*, candytuft, phlox, larkspur, bluebells and bleeding heart. He can bring in floral treasures from the fields and woods—plants native to his own locality. With a little care such plants can be removed and planted almost any day in the year when the ground can be spaded. Wild aster, golden rod, violets, ferns, columbine and other similar plants can be handled in this way. If one pays a little attention to the conditions under which the plant was growing when found and gives it as nearly as possible similar conditions in its new home, he will usually be successful.

For early spring bloom nothing is more satisfactory than a bed of tulips, narcissus, or hyacinths bordered with crocus or snowdrops. To make a bulb

bed throw out the top soil to a depth of six inches and place in the bottom two inches of well rotted manure. Spade this in and replace half of the top soil and level it. Set the bulbs firmly on this surface, hyacinths 6 inches, tulips 5 inches, narcissus 3 inches apart each way. Cover them with the balance of the top soil so that the bulbs are 3 or 4 inches below the surface. crocus and snowdrops are planted touching each other. Tulips are best for making simple designs in colors, but this is not necessary for pleasing effects.

When the ground begins to freeze apply a six-inch mulch of straw, marsh hay, cornstalks or coarse manure. If you use leaves put on only about three inches as they lie close together, thus smothering out the frost. Early in the spring this covering must be gradually removed or the heavy mulch may cause premature growth. After flowering the bulbs should be lifted and dried off as you would onions, kept in a dry place until fall and planted again. The bulb beds can be used for later-blooming annuals during the summer.

Among the best flowering shrubs are roses, snowball, lilac, hydrangea paniculata, Japan quince, mock orange, spiræas, forsythia, privet, barberry, wild crab and rebbud elder.

The following list of roses proved hardy on the Wooded Island, Jackson park, Chicago, after eight years' trial:

Baroness Rothschild	John Hopper
Gen. Jacqueminot	Mme Gabriel Luizet
Anne de Diesbach	Magna Charta
Alfred Colomb	Mrs. John Laing
Louis Van Houtte	Paul Neyron
Marshall P. Wilder	Souv. Gabriel de Levet
Poenia	Mrs. Geo. Dickson
Prince Camille de Rohan	Francois Levet
Victor Verdier	Comtesse de Serenye
Grace Darling	La France
Madame Plantier	Merveille de Lyon

Clothilde Soupert is another good rose and hardy during the coldest winters at Champaign. Crimson Rambler, Mary Washington, Baltimore Belle, Queen of the Prairies are the hardiest climbing roses. The hardy vines are honeysuckle, Virginia creeper, clematis, wistaria, woodbine, matrimony vine etc. All climbers are useful for covering verandas and relieving the monotony of rigid lines.

Some people will want a flower garden in which is a collection of everything. This can either be a portion of the backyard or the vegetable garden. This is a matter of growing flowers for flowers' sake only. It is governed solely by the amount of time and land at one's disposal. In it grows the annuals and shrubs you like in the best way to show off each kind. Make winding paths with surprises at every turn. The flower garden is for the enjoyment of the family rather than the passer-by and thus affords the opportunity for experiment or the emphasizing of one's personal tastes.

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